

Message Text

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UNCLAS TORONTO 2191

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TAGS: PINT, SOPN, CA
SUBJECT: TORONTO STAR SUGGESTS RADICAL CHANGE IN OTTAWA AS NECESSARY
FIRST STEP TO SAVE CANADA

1. THE FIFTH AND FINAL EDITORIAL IN THE TORONTO STAR SPECIAL SERIES ON CANADA AFTER THE PQ VICTORY WAS HEADLINED "NEW FACES TO SAVE THE COUNTRY" AND WAS PRINTED DECEMBER 2. THE EDITORIAL CALLED FOR A REVERSAL OF TRADITIONAL TRUDEAU POLICY AND THE FORMATION OF A COALITION OR "SAVE CANADA" CABINET.

2. THE STAR FELT THAT THE PRESENT TRUDEAU GOVERNMENT COULD SATISFY THE DEMANDS OF THE PRESENT SITUATION ONLY BY:

(A) REVERSING ITS PRESENT POLICY ON FEDERALISM -- TRUDEAU "HAS TRIED TO SHIFT THE FOCUS OF FRENCH CANADIANS' POLITICAL ATTENTION AND LOYALTY FROM QUEBEC TO CANADA AS A WHOLE, THROUGH THE FEDERAL BILINGUALISM PROGRAM, AND BY ENCOURAGING FRENCH CANADIANS TO PLAY THEIR FULL ROLE ON THE NATIONAL STAGE. THIS POLICY SHOULD NOW BE CONSIDERED AN HONORABLE FAILURE." THE STAR CONTINUED "IF TRUDEAU COULD REVERSE POLICY, HE WOULD BE THE BEST LEADER AVAILABLE TO NEGOTIATE A NEW DEAL THAT WOULD HOLD CANADA TOGETHER. INTELLECTUALLY, HE IS THE ABLEST

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MAN IN OUR PUBLIC LIFE. HE IS ALSO COURAGEOUS AND TOUGH, AND

HIS DEVOTION TO THE UNITY OF CANADA IS IRREPROACHABLE."

(B) STRENGTH AND THE FEDERAL CABINET. "POLICY REVERSAL WOULD NOT BE ENOUGH. THE TRUDEAU GOVERNMENT AS IT STANDS SUFFERS FROM LACK OF PUBLIC CONFIDENCE, NOT ONLY BECAUSE ITS BRAND OF FEDERALISM HAS GONE SOUR BUT ALSO FOR OTHER REASONS, NOTABLY IT MISHANDLING OF THE ECONOMY." THE STAR STATED THAT THE BEST WAY TO INFUSE STRENGTHENING FRESH BLOOD WOULD BE "TO RECRUIT DISTINGUISHED CANADIANS FROM THE DIFFERENT REGIONS OF THE COUNTRY, ON A NON-PARTISAN BASIS." THOSE SUGGESTED BY THE NEWSPAPER INCLUDE FORMER PC LEADER STANFIELD, A PRAIRIE PROVINCE PREMIER (SCHREYER, BLAKENEY OR LOUGHEED), JUSTICE BERGER, ALBERTA GAS TRUNK LIKE PRESIDENT ROBERT BLAIR, SENATOR SIDNEY BUCKWOLD, GREAT WEST LIFE ASSURANCE CO. PRESIDENT J.W. BURNS, DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT HENRY HICKS, BUSINESSMAN LANFRANCO AMATO, LABOR LEADER WILLIAM DODGE, FORMER ONTARIO PREMIER JOHN ROBARTS, AND UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO PRESIDENT JOHN EVANS.

3. THE EDITORIAL CONCLUDED AS FOLLOWS:

QUOTE THE PRIME MINISTER'S APPEAL TO THESE PEOPLE WOULD HAVE TO BE ON A BASIS OF A PATRIOTIC, NOT A PARTISAN, ENTERPRISE. THE TASK IS TO SAVE CONFEDERATION, NOT THE LIBERAL PARTY. THIS MIGHT BE ACCOMPLISHED BY RECRUITING THE OUTSIDERS FOR AN EMERGENCY PERIOD ONLY -- SAY TWO YEARS - WHILE A RE-DEAL OF CONFEDERATION WAS BEING NEGOTIATED. THEY COULD BE GIVEN SEATS IN THE SENATE, WHICH WOULD ALLOW THEM TO KEEP ANY PRESENT PARTY AFFILIATIONS INTACT, AND FUTURE OPTIONS OPEN.

THE STRENGTHENING OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY A REGROUPMENT OF POLITICAL FORCES TO ADVOCATE THE CAUSE OF CANADA IN QUEBEC. THE TASK CANNOT BE LEFT TO THE DEFEATED AND DISCREDITED QUEBEC LIBERAL PARTY THERE. THAT WOULD MAKE IT ALL TOO EASY FOR THE PARTI QUEBECOIS TO MOLD PUBLIC OPINION IN FAVOR OF SEPARATION. WHAT'S NEEDED IS A COMBINATION OF THE BEST TALENTS, POLITICAL AND NON-POLITICAL, TO CONVINCE FRENCH CANADIANS THAT QUEBEC CAN FIND ITS BEST FUTURE WITHIN A REFORMED FEDERAL SYSTEM.

FIRST, HOWEVER, MUST COME OTTAWA'S COMMITMENT TO RADICAL CHANGE, AND THE FORMATION OF A GOVERNMENT CAPABLE OF IMPLEMENTING IT. AT STAKE IS NOTHING LESS THAN CANADA'S SURVIVAL. UNQUOTE.

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